

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 5, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am concerned about what appears to be a dramatic change in U.S. proliferation policy. Press reports in the March 5 *Washington Post* indicate that your "administration has acquiesced in North Korea becoming a nuclear power." This statement is supported by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last month, in which he indicated that "our major fear is that North Korea would pass on fissile material or other nuclear technology to 'rogue states' or outlaw groups." This statement seems to indicate that the U.S. has already accepted the notion of North Korea as a nuclear power and has moved on to the next issue, namely the further spread of nuclear weapons. The United States has always been staunchly opposed to the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapons states, as demonstrated by the current actions in Iraq and in the United Nations Security Council.

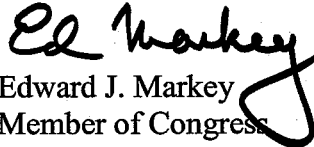
By failing to respond to the international nuclear crisis in North Korea with anything other than hostile rhetoric, the United States appears to be treating the situation in North Korea with less urgency than the situation in Iraq. This impression is only heightened if we have now conceded the emergence of a rogue nuclear state on the Korean Peninsula, and moved to containment of further spread of North Korean nuclear technology as the operative strategy for dealing with this new development. This can only encourage other nations, such as Iran and Syria, to acquire nuclear weapons, believing that we will not act to stop them.

Accordingly, I respectfully request your assistance in providing prompt responses to the following questions:

1. Should the Congress assume that U.S. policy has now shifted from preventing North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons to merely containing those nuclear weapons? If not, are you willing to declare that the reports referred to above are false?
2. If North Korea successfully acquires nuclear weapons and is not deterred by the international community, what are the implications for the spread of nuclear weapons to the rest of the world, such as Iran?
3. Why has the United States not followed the recommendations of the International Atomic Energy Agency and aggressively pursued this matter before the United Nations Security Council?
4. Given these most recent revelations, when does the U.S. intend to cease aiding North Korea in its quest for nuclear weapons by authorizing the transfer of nuclear technology and expertise to that nation, under the guise of a civilian energy program which includes two light water nuclear reactors?

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in providing prompt responses to these questions. I would appreciate your response to these questions by March 26, 2003. Please have your staff contact Dr. Benn Tannenbaum or Mr. Jeffrey Duncan of my staff at (202) 225-2836 if you have any questions about this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Markey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress